

## A B S T R A C T

5 An inlet arrangement for inserting a preform (3')  
into a furnace (1') for drawing a fiber (2'). The  
furnace includes an enclosure (4') at the top of which  
there are both an opening to allow insertion of a preform  
which moves in translation, and a preform inlet  
arrangement (13'). The inlet arrangement comprises both  
an injector (6') situated at the level of the opening to  
10 inject inert gas around the preform and to fill the  
enclosure, and at least one seal (17B) fixed above the  
injector and designed to allow the preform to pass  
therethrough, with its cylindrical main body (9') being  
surrounded. The inlet arrangement further comprises an  
15 airlock (13) for closing and sealing the top of the  
furnace, above the injector, whether a preform is present  
or absent, which airlock is pressurized to prevent the  
surrounding air entering. The rods of the equipped  
preforms carry respective continuity tubes (20) of the  
20 same diameter as the bodies.

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